

**The Westfield Leader** THE SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD  
 — Established 1890 —  
 Legal Newspaper for the Town of Westfield,  
 Boroughs of Mountainside and Garwood  
 And the County of Union, N.J.

Members of:  
 New Jersey Press Association • National Newspaper Association • Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Scotch Plains Business & Professional Association • Fanwood Business & Professional Association

Periodicals - Postage Paid at Westfield, New Jersey Periodicals - Postage Paid at Scotch Plains, New Jersey  
 P.O. Box 250 • 251 North Avenue, West Westfield, N.J. 07091 P.O. Box 368 Scotch Plains, N.J. 07076  
 Tele: (908) 232-4407 • E-mail: editor@goleader.com • Web: www.goleader.com • Fax: (908) 232-0473  
 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the offices of the newspapers at  
 P. O. Box 250, Westfield, New Jersey 07091

Published every Thursday by Watchung Communications, Inc.

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SUBSCRIPTION PRICE  
 One-year - \$28 • Two-year - \$52 • Three-year - \$76 • One-year college (September to May) - \$20

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## Why Did Legislature Change Law Regarding Lt. Governor?

New Jerseyans who thought they would know the candidates for lieutenant governor by now will have to wait until the end of the month. Our question is why are legislators rewriting the law three-and-half years after voters approved a ballot question to create the post? Were too many loopholes found?

Originally, lieutenant governor candidates were to have been chosen 30 days after the June 2 Primary Election, thus by the July 4th weekend. But state legislation signed by Governor Jon Corzine last month now stipulates that the lieutenant governor selections be named 30 days after the primary results have been certified, thus making the new deadline July 27. Gubernatorial Primary results for the Democratic and Republican races were certified on June 26.

Voters favored the creation of the new position back in November 2005, when they approved a ballot question. The Legislature put the question before voters following two stunts in which the Senate President, Donald DiFrancesco in 2001 and Richard Codey in 2005, served as acting governor following the resignations of Governors Christine Whitman and Jim McGreevey.

The position of lieutenant governor has to be taken seriously, as this individual has often become the new

governor, given the recent track record of politics not only in New Jersey but nationally. The governors in Connecticut and New York resigned following scandals, and now Alaska Governor Sarah Palin is leaving office at the end of the month. Voters and the media must be given a sufficient amount of time to review the backgrounds of these candidates.

The lieutenant governor candidates will face-off in at least one debate in the fall under the requirements of the new state law.

We want to know how much this new office is going to cost taxpayers. New Jersey has decided that the lieutenant governor will assume the duties of one of the governor's cabinet posts, although they will not serve as attorney general. Will this new post require a State Police escort similar to the Governor?

While the lieutenant governor will take a backseat to the governor, it is important to know the exact role this individual will play in the administration and what type of governor they would be.

We hope Governor Corzine and GOP nominee Chris Christie have done their homework in selecting their running mates. After all, New Jersey needs a lieutenant governor with solid leadership skills, not just a cheerleader for the governor.

## Letters to the Editor

### Latest Westfield School Administration Contract: 'Ethically Questionable,' Have They No Shame?

With its recently announced agreement with the Westfield Association of Administrators and Supervisors (26 school principals and the like), giving 4.4 to 4.6 percent annual salary increases over the next three years, the board of education, in my opinion, continues to show lack of concern for the taxpayer public at large, or even the quality of the Westfield school system.

The board members appear to be blind to the fact that millions of Americans are losing their jobs (including plenty of Westfield residents), the value of investment savings has plummeted, the average house price in Westfield has dropped by over 20 percent from the high, and the CPI Index has actually dropped by 1 percent over the last year.

Not only did the board not have to offer any increase to these public employees, but I believe that they would have had many qualified applicants for every position at less than the existing salary, should these administrators have had a problem with a contract that was actually fair to the taxpayer public. As far as the health plan givebacks go, I am sure this still leaves a plan more generous than most private sector plans (together with a pension plan better than any private sector plan).

In my opinion, it is ethically questionable to give (the board) or receive (the administrators) raises when the people paying the tab are clearly suffering hard times and lucky to be even keeping their jobs. Have they no shame?

The bottom line is that taxes in Westfield increase every year at rates far in excess of inflation because the board of education continually gives raises that are far in excess of inflation and unnecessary to a quality public school system.

But wait, next spring at budget time the board will bemoan yet again that most of the budget is negotiated salary, about which they can do nothing other than have some combination of layoffs, service reductions and increased class sizes.

A troubled economy and its consequences are likely to persist for years. Every parent with a child in school should consider that the quality of the Westfield school system would be better preserved through salary control than through layoffs and service reductions, the alterna-

tive the board evidently is choosing by entering into contracts with salary increases like these.

Jeff Bash  
Westfield

### SPF Ed. Enrichment Foundation Success

I wanted to take a few moments to thank a few folks who made the fundraising event for the Scotch Plains - Fanwood Educational Enrichment Foundation (EEF) such a success. The event was planned by Linda Caminiti and Phyllis Mirabella under the leadership of Leland McGee, foundation President.

Those in attendance had a good time and raised money for our students in Middle and High school to attend leadership classes and training events. Now, more than ever, we need to provide leadership training for our students; they are our future. If anyone out there is still interested in donating any amount to help our students, they can send a check payable to: EEF of Scotch Plains - Fanwood, Inc. to my attention at 11 Tillotson Road in Fanwood.

Thanks to our Mayors - Malool and Mahr for coming and supporting the event. Thanks to *The SP-F Times* for covering the fundraiser and helping raise the awareness of the foundation. Special thanks needs to go to John Cioffi at the Swiss Pastry Shoppe. John donated the dessert for the event, which was a highlight for me. Please go there and support John at 1711 East 2nd Street in SP.

Phyllis and I look forward to continuing our support of the Educational Enrichment Foundation in the future.

Al Mirabella  
Fanwood



Susan Dougherty for *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times*  
**ONE LUMP OR TWO...More than 100 demonstrators in Summit make clear their opposition to current federal government programs by holding a TEA Party (Taxed Enough Already) on July 3. The event was organized by NJ Citizens for Liberty, www.njcitizensforliberty.com. Their theme called for "fellow patriots in America to celebrate independence, liberty and freedom."**

## Letters to the Editor

### Rep. Lance Has Breached the Trust; Energy Bill Entirely Wrong Approach

Last week, on June 26, obscured by the untimely death of Michael Jackson, Representative Leonard Lance, a Republican and our representative to the House of Representatives, joined seven other Republicans and voted in favor of the Waxman-Markey climate change bill. The provisions of the bill are not consistent with the traditional values of the Republican Party or with the republican (small "r") system of government on which this country was founded and which made it the great country that it is.

Depending on which day of the week it is, the bill has been described as addressing global warming, or providing "green" jobs or reducing our reliance on foreign sources of energy. Some people think global warming is a bit of a sham, and some don't. It is fair to say the issue remains unsettled at this point. On the job front, the Heritage Foundation estimates that the net job loss caused by this bill in Representative Lance's district alone will be about 2,400.

We've all heard that the bill will substantially increase our energy costs; what hasn't been emphasized is that these increases will find their way into the Federal Treasury - just as our taxes do. Basically, every business will have to pay the government for a permit to use energy, and guess whom those businesses will charge to get that money? It has been estimated that the loss in personal income to the people living right here in this Congressional district will be \$599 million in 2012, the first year the bill would take effect.

As for reducing our dependence on foreign sources of energy, there would seem to be other, more straight-forward ways to do that (such as requiring higher gas mileage or allowing new generation nuclear power plants to be built as the rest of the world is and has been doing these last 30 years while we haven't built even one).

The bill will require that anyone selling their house gets a signoff from the government that the house meets certain energy standards, and if the house doesn't satisfy those standards, you'll have to fix

the windows or the weather stripping or put in new light bulbs or whatever in order to sell it.

The bill also sets up a system, run by the federal government, for certain people including anyone earning less than 150 percent of the official poverty level, to receive monthly payments directly from the federal government as direct deposits into their bank accounts to make up for their lost purchasing power caused by the bill. The bill itself acknowledges quite clearly that all of us will lose purchasing power.

Preserving the environment and reducing our dependence on foreign oil are important. Unfortunately, Rep. Lance and anyone else who voted for this bill seems to think that the way to address these issues is to increase the level of government involvement in our lives and increase taxes on almost everyone.

As for the people who will receive these direct deposits, the bill increases those people's dependence on the federal government as well as reduces their incentive to care about what is going on. Picture someone opening their PSE&G bill and thinking: "Hey, what do I care that the government has set up this new tax system and made all these new rules? They're giving me money every month just like a paycheck! Hmm, maybe I ought to keep voting for these guys."

This bill takes entirely the wrong approach in addressing the issues it supposedly addresses, makes the poor even more dependent on the federal government, provides for the feds to take more money from everyone else disguised as higher energy costs and increases the federal government's power.

Rep. Lance was elected as a Republican and, in my view, has breached the trust of those who voted for him. If I'd wanted this kind of expansion of government, I'd have voted for Linda Stender. Maybe a real Republican ought to challenge him in the next primary election. I'd vote for that person, and I don't think I'd be the only one.

Richard Fortunato  
Scotch Plains

### State Bill A-3372 Will Stifle Economy, Impede 'Go Green' Programs

*Editor's Note: This letter was sent to Chris Christie and copied to the press.*

I am writing to you not only as a homeowner but also as a small-business owner in New Jersey. As a licensed electrical contractor for 25 years, our company has recently become involved with the installations of Solar PV. As a result, we have been doing our homework on the financial incentives offered by the State and Federal Government in regards to solar energy systems.

As you are aware, the Bill A-3372, Mandating Prevailing Wage for Clean-energy Projects has cleared the Assembly and awaiting Governor Corzine's approval. Should this bill pass, it will definitely have a huge impact on the costs that would be imposed on home and business owners in order to go "Green." The prevailing wage rate would add 25 to 30 percent to the total cost of solar energy projects, thus the higher cost would definitely outweigh the benefits of the rebates and tax incentives for renewable energy projects.

The economic state that we are in, coupled with the prevailing wage being imposed on Renewable Energy projects, will ensure that fewer home and business owners will undertake what will be such an expensive project should this bill pass. As well, this bill will impose a costly and unnecessary burden on businesses that are already struggling in this deep recession.

We have contacted Mr. Peters at NJ Public Television and Radio in regards to this matter. Knowing you are opposed to the "project labor agreement," we urge you fight this bill. Perhaps integrate it into your campaign and utilize the NJ Public Television and Radio to raise the awareness of this issue, which will have a snowball effect on our whole economy.

Joseph Moroz  
West Milford

### Mountainside Teachers Union President Clarifies Position

I have attached the statement I read at the June 25 board of education meeting at Beechwood School in Mountainside. In your article in the Thursday, July 2, edition of the *The Westfield Leader*, "MS BOE OKs Salary Cut For Summer Enrichment," I was quoted as saying, "On Thursday, June 18, I consulted with the MEA officers and decided to advise our members not to accept the lower salary."

If you check the attached statement, the correct quote would be:  
 "On Thursday, June 18, I consulted with the MEA officers and we decided instead of advising all of our members to not accept the lower salary, we would give them the choice of either accepting the new salary or declining summer employment. We understood many of our members were counting on this money and it wouldn't be fair for us to deny them any income at all. We understood there were also members who would no longer benefit from participating in the program at the lower salary, due to child care expenses and other personal issues. We also felt badly for the parents who were depending on this program and would be inconvenienced by its cancellation; not to mention the children who were looking forward to attending."

I am not here tonight to point fingers or place blame. I am here tonight to make sure the Board of Education members, and the community, understand why some staff members, myself included, chose to decline further employment with the Summer Enrichment Program. I am hoping that everyone can understand the immense disappointment and frustration of the staff to learn - one week before the program's start - they would be choosing whether or not to work for half of what they had originally anticipated. As I said, I am not here to place blame. However, I do believe the Summer Enrichment Instructors need to be recognized as the victims in this scenario and not portrayed as the villains."

I would greatly appreciate this error being corrected.

*Editor's Note: The statement provided:*  
 "On tonight's agenda, you will be voting to approve a revised list of staff and salaries for the Summer Enrichment program. It has come to my attention some incorrect information has been given to parents, so I am here tonight to clarify some of the facts."

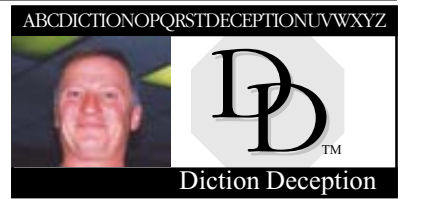
On Wednesday, June 17, I received a phone call from Dr. Baubles at my home. At that time I was informed there was a problem with the Summer Enrichment salaries and she asked for my input as the President of the Mountainside Education Association. I was told there were not enough registrations to support the staff salaries. These position and salaries were approved at the April 28, Board of Education meeting. Summer Enrichment instructors were approved at the agreed upon stipend rate of \$39.71 an hour for a total of \$2382.60 for the entire summer enrichment program. I was told the pro-

gram would be able to run, and the instructors would all be able to keep their positions, if their salaries were reduced to \$20 an hour.

On Thursday, June 18, I consulted with the MEA officers and we decided instead of advising all of our members to not accept the lower salary, we would give them the choice of either accepting the new salary or declining summer employment. We understood many of our members were counting on this money and it wouldn't be fair for us to deny them any income at all. We understood there were also members who would no longer benefit from participating in the program at the lower salary, due to child care expenses and other personal issues. We also felt badly for the parents who were depending on this program and would be inconvenienced by its cancellation; not to mention the children who were looking forward to attending."

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Suzanne Jenks, President  
Mountainside Ed. Assoc.



Below are four arcane words, each with four definitions - only one is correct. The others are made up. Are you sharp enough to discern this deception of diction?

If you can guess one correctly - good guess. If you get two - well-read individual. If you get three - word expert. If you get all four - You must have a lot of free time!

All words and correct definitions come from the board game **Diction Deception**.

**Answers to last week's arcane words.**

1. Plaguy - Troublesome; annoying
2. Impennate - Without feathers or wings
3. Hegemonic - Ruling; predominant
4. Hebetation - The act of making dull or stupid

#### DRAWK

1. Coarse weeds growing in grain; wild oats
2. Disgraceful; cheap
3. Of little or no consequence
4. Barren; unprofitable

#### FERMILLET

1. Hives
2. A buckle or clasp
3. A tobacco or money pouch
4. A jeweler's gouging tool for working in a depression, as in engraving metal

#### TIMBROLOGY

1. The study of eye diseases and care
2. In political economy, the science of commercial exchanges
3. The science or study of postage stamps
4. The study of prehistoric birds

#### IMPRECATION

1. A curse
2. Humiliation; shame; falling from grace
3. A dashing or clashing
4. A tearing in pieces

## Letters to the Editor

### Cap and Trade: Stop It For Your Children

Independents, Democrats and Republicans, wake up! Your children will not have the same opportunities you've had to realize their dreams because your Congressman, Leonard Lance, has sold everyone's future down the river to curry favor from special interests. The Cap and Trade legislation that he helped the House pass is the most insidious and destructive tax ever levied on American taxpayers.

Stop and think about it. The Cap and Trade is a far-reaching tax on energy production and use. Everything you use in your daily life - what you eat, the clothes you wear, the toys for your children/grandchildren, the materials that put a roof over your head, your transportation - whether public or private, etc. will cost dramatically more with this tax. This bill was even going to tax the methane gas emitted by cows, the *flatulence*, until special farm interests had it taken out in the middle of the night.

After I learned about his vote, I called his office and told an aide that I assumed Lance only wanted to be in office for one term because, although I voted for him last time around, I was going to do everything in my power to see that he didn't have a second term. This bill still has to pass the Senate, but whatever your political affiliations, let Senators Lautenberg and Menendez know that the spending nonsense in Washington has to stop or our children will never have the opportunities to realize their dreams and potential like you had.

Bruce Baker  
Westfield

### Clark Circle Has Good Points But Dangerous

I believe that the removal of the circle at exit 135 of the Parkway has generally improved the flow of traffic in this area, but there is one aspect of the new traffic pattern that has resulted in a dangerous situation that needs to be remedied.

If you are coming north on the Parkway, and you want to exit onto Central Avenue toward Westfield, you must be in the center lane after the first traffic light.

The signage at this point, however, is vague and misleading. If you are unaware of the nuances of this turn, you may believe that either the center or left lanes will get you to Central Avenue. In fact, the left lane does not provide access to Central. Invariably, drivers in the left will attempt to force their way into the center lane after turning the corner and realizing that they cannot get to Central from the left lane.

The result is a dangerous situation where cars try to merge without signaling. Cars in the left stop dead as they wait to be able to merge to the center. Cars in the center lane do not allow cars in the left to merge, or cars race from the second light as drivers in the left try to get into the center lane.

The county should separate the two lanes with pylons and clarify the signage in order to alert unknowing drivers that only the center lane may be used to reach Central Avenue.

Bill Gottdenker  
Mountainside

### Union Thanks Lance For Energy Bill Vote

Rush Limbaugh would have them strung and quartered. But the New Jersey International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) is happy that our state has three Republican Congressmen who had the foresight and fortitude to support the climate change bill. Congressman Frank Loblondino, Chris Smith and Leonard Lance were a key part of the successful vote of 219-212, in addition to the Democratic Congressmen, all of who voted in favor of the legislation.

Congressman Frank Loblondino has a longstanding record of supporting the interests of New Jersey residents even when the decisions are not quite that easy. We thank all of the Congressmen for their help in combating climate change and doing the right thing for the future of our country.

Chip Gerrity  
President, NJ IBEW

